7. Registry of lands in the High Range in the name of Indians for cardamom and tea cultivation at the concession rates allowed to Europeans.

MR. S. P. HUSSAIN KHAN ROWTHER (*Member, Devicolam taluk*) prefaced his representation with a few observations on the dual control exercised by the Revenue and the Forest Departments on the cardamom areas in the Devicolam taluk. The member next urged for the representation of the Travancore Cardamom Planters' Association both on the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. The European Planters' Association was allowed representation on both these houses, though they had only a few members from Devicolam. But the Travancore Cardamom Planters' Association had as many as five thousand members on its rolls and yet had no representation. The Association, though it had its head-quarters in British India, really belonged, as its name indicated, to Travancore. It was strong reason therefore that the Association should be allowed to send representatives to the Council and the Assembly. Then, turning to the subject of his representation, he requested that the Sirkar lands available in the Devicolam taluk might be assigned to Indian planters for tea or cardamom cultivation at the same rates at which they were registered to European planters. It was contended by some that most of the cardamom planters came from British India. But every British Indian who owned any land in Travancore had the interests of Travancore at heart. More cardamom lands should therefore be thrown open to the Indian planters.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Hussain Khan Rowther, you speak of the Travancore Cardamom Growers' Association. I am afraid the name does not correctly represent what you have stated it to be. It is an association of non-Travancoreans established in the Madura District to look after their interests in respect of cardamoms they grow in Travancore. You yourself speak of the rights of Travancoreans. But I have elicited from you the fact that you are not a Travancorean yourself but that you belong to the Madura District of British India and that you are good enough to come to Travancore for some part of each year to look after your cardamom interests. You ask that Travancore lands be given at a nominal rate to the members of this Cardamom Growers' Association, I am afraid I shall be failing in my duty if I give away valuable Travancore lands for less than their true value.

Then again you ask for further lands being thrown open to cardamom cultivation. There are certain lands which have to be preserved as forest lands in the interests of Travancore. As you may be aware these lands are not under the dual control of the Revenue Department and of the Forest Department as you would have us believe. That shows incomplete knowledge of the state of affairs in Travancore. I regret that I cannot adopt a general policy of throwing open large areas of lands exclusively for cardamom cultivation.

8. Price of lands sold under the Waste Land Rules.

MR. W. A. J. MILNER (*Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association*) showed how the price of waste lands had risen from Rs. 25 per acre in 1921 to Rs. 50 in 1926 and Rs. 70 in 1928. The same price was moreover charged for all kinds of lands irrespective of their quality. The member deprecated such indiscriminate assessments, and he urged in particular for due consideration being shown in the matter of assignment of lands to the European planters who had done all the pioneering work in the field of tea and coffee cultivation in the State.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Milner, I heard what you have said with great interest. But there is no getting away from the fact that land values like all other economic matters, follow the law of supply and demand. There is no difficulty at all in disposing of lands suitable for tea or rubber cultivation in Travancore. I may mention one instance, in Peermade District, certain lands were put to auction and they fetched 89 rupees per acre.

You talk of vested interests of the old pioneers. The pioneers did excellent work, established themselves and opened up the country. To them, the Government and the people owe an obligation. But in respect of lands, as in everything else, the tendency of all modern civilized Governments is steadily to avoid monopolies and exclusive reservation.

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